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# Abu-Bekr Temple

William J. Petersen

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## Abu-Bekr Temple

Abu-Bekr Temple in Sioux City is the youngest of the four Shrine Temples located in Iowa. Its name was selected upon its submission by a committee chairmanned by George D. Perkins, editor of the *Sioux City Journal*. Abu-Bekr was born in Mecca in 573 A.D. and was the father-in-law of Mohammed, to whom he showed the deepest veneration and the most unswerving devotion. According to the *Journal*:

When Mohammed fled from Mecca, Abu-Bekr was his sole companion and shared both his hardships and triumphs, remaining constantly with him until the day of his death. During his last illness the prophet indicated Abu-Bekr as his successor, by desiring him to offer up prayer for the people. Omar, fearing the sayings of the prophet would be entirely forgotten when those who had listened to them had been removed by death, induced Abu-Bekr to see to their preservation in a written form. . . . Abu-Bekr died on August 23, A. D. 634.

Abu-Bekr Temple was chartered on July 15, 1908, and was the 104th created by the Imperial Council. Its original petition to El Kahir to help create a Temple dates back with Za-Ga-Zig to 1890 but it did not succeed in its quest until 1907, largely through the support of Kaaba, El Kahir, El Riad, and Tangier of Omaha. The significance



of this long struggle was recognized by the *Sioux City Journal* of October 16, 1907, as it reported the installation of the new Temple preceding its chartering. According to the *Journal*:

Today is the day to which members of the Ancient Arabic Order, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, residing in northwestern Iowa, have looked forward to for years and years. Today there will be instituted in Sioux City a temple of the Shrine and no longer will there be necessity for pilgrimages to El Kahir at Cedar Rapids, Kaaba at Davenport, El Riad at Sioux Falls, Tangier at Omaha, or Za-Ga-Zig at Des Moines.

Northwestern Iowa Nobles after today will have a shrine of their own.

The institution of Abu-Bekr Temple on October 16, 1907, was the biggest Shrine meeting in the history of Iowa up to that time. Not only was Imperial Potentate Frank C. Roundy of Medinah Temple present in Sioux City, but his successor, Deputy Imperial Potentate Edwin I. Alderman of Marion, Iowa, helped conduct the ceremonies. The three Iowa Illustrious Potentates W. G. Haskell of El Kahir, Frank O. Evans of Za-Ga-Zig, and John Soller of Kaaba, as well as the Potentates of Tangier Temple, Omaha, El Riad Temple, Sioux Falls, and Medinah of Chicago were among the numerous dignitaries present.

The fezzes of Sesostris of Lincoln, Osman of St. Paul, and Zuhrah of Minneapolis, could also be seen on the streets of Sioux City. Tangier of Omaha and El Riad of Sioux Falls sent particu-



larly large delegations. According to the Omaha Bee:

Camels of the Tangier nobles have been shod with last summer's straw hats; great bladders of camel's milk and zem-zem have been stored in the saddlebags; everything is ready to move to the foot of the tree called Tooba, where the traditional banquet will be served . . . [at] the oasis of Sioux City, on the prairies of Iowa.

That Sioux City did not win its Temple without a struggle is revealed by the Sioux Falls *Argus-Leader*:

Sioux Falls Shriners feel a deep interest in the new shrine at Sioux City. Throughout the fight which Sioux City had to make against Des Moines for the right to have a shrine in their city they were backed earnestly and always by the Sioux Falls Shriners individually and by El Riad Temple as a body. It was mainly through the assistance of the Sioux Falls and Cedar Rapids Shriners that Sioux City was enabled to win out in the contest.

The election of officers of Abu-Bekr is an index to leading Sioux City business and professional men in the year 1907.

Will H. Beck, Potentate  
D. M. Brownlee, Chief Rabban  
F. S. Lamar, Ass't Rabban  
J. E. Garver, High Priest  
A. A. Smith, Oriental Guide  
J. E. Henriques, Treasurer  
George E. Ward, Recorder  
E. G. Dilley, Ceremonial Master  
John R. Carter, Second Master  
W. D. Irvine, Marshal  
H. H. Hawman, Director  
A. E. McManus, Captain of the Guard

A. B. Walker, Outer Guard  
J. U. Sammis, Inquisitor  
Frank T. Houx, Alchemist  
S. W. Appleton, Pharmacist  
J. O. Hammer, Camel Shoer  
C. A. Borman, Patrol Commander  
Moses E. Reed, Chief Musician  
M. W. Starks, Photographer  
W. L. Ehlers, Hittemagin  
W. H. Rogers, Chief Foozler  
C. A. Waite, Holder of Thermometer  
M. J. Orr, Master of Blow Torch



In addition to the above — F. M. Hatch and A. J. Siman were Camel Drivers; W. H. Seymour and B. H. Graham, Pyramid Guides; William Gordon and J. L. Kennedy, Windjammers; Dr. A. J. Weeks, Chief Surgeon; Dr. G. C. Cottam, Dr. R. E. Conniff, Dr. W. H. Hanchette, and Dr. F. P. Webber composed the Medical Board.

The parade, which formed at the New Grand Theater at five o'clock, included the following formations.

Squad of Twenty Horsemen from the Sioux City Stock Yards

Omaha Band

Nobles from Tangier Temple, Omaha

Tallyhos carrying Imperial Potentate and Illustrious Potentates

Officers of Abu-Bekr Temple

Members of Visiting Shrines

Reed's Military Band

Members of Abu-Bekr Temple

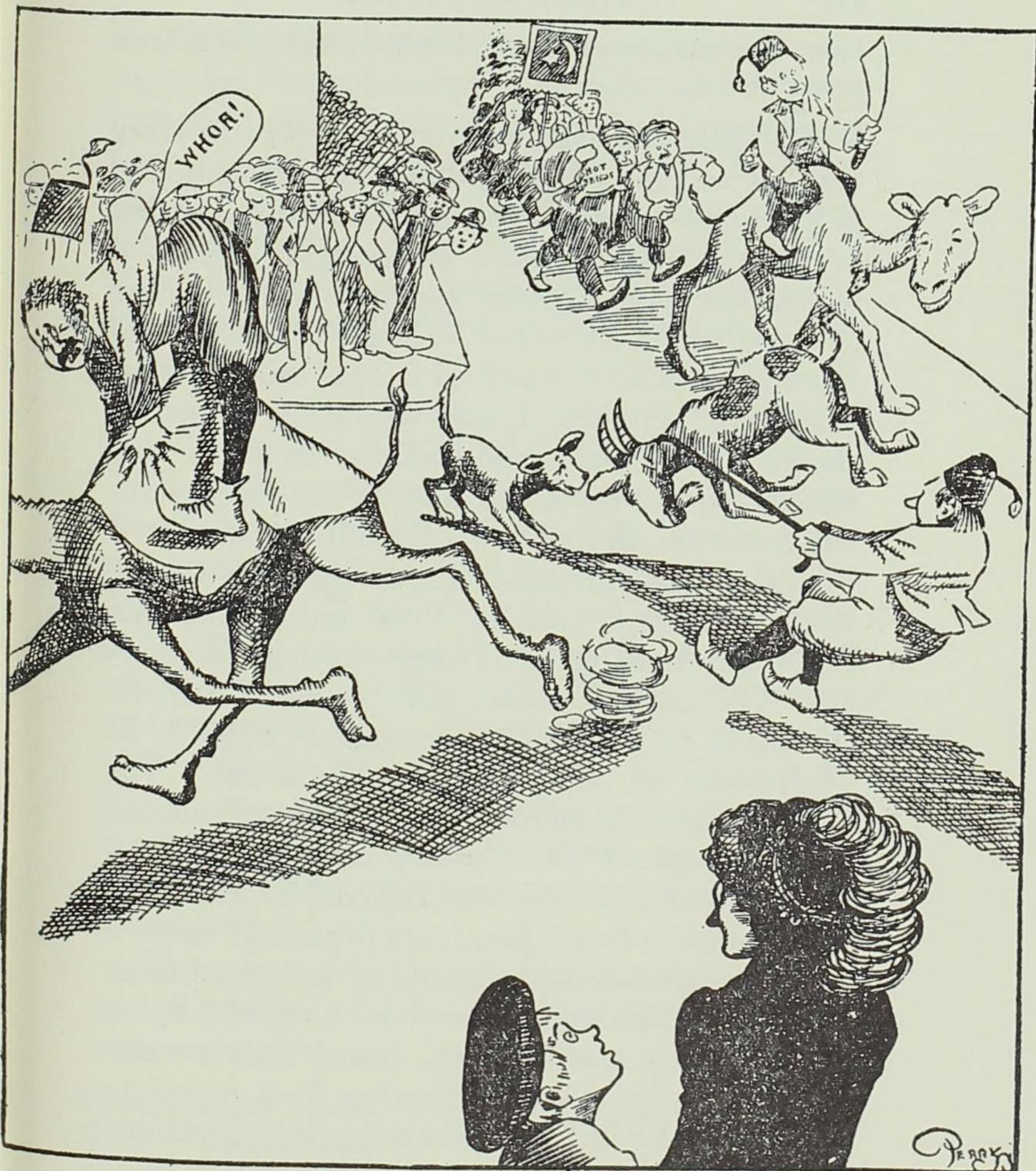
Candidates Escorted by Abu-Bekr Temple's Burlesque Band

Comic Features

At the evening ceremonies Deputy Imperial Potentate Edwin I. Alderman (destined to become the Imperial Potentate the following year) declared:

This temple in Sioux City starts out with bright prospects. Its membership from the beginning will number about 400, not counting the candidates who will be initiated tomorrow. The territory from which it will draw makes it possible to become one of the leading temples in





"SAY, MA, IS THAT A CIRCUS?"  
"NO, MY SON; IT'S THE SHRINERS."

Sioux City Journal,  
October 17, 1907.



Iowa. Probably no other temple will be instituted in Iowa in our lifetime.

Abu-Bekr has lived up to this prophecy in every way. It was the fourth and last Temple instituted in Iowa and it has developed ten uniformed bodies in the half century since its creation, several of which have won National attention. Most famous of these ten Units is the White Horse Mounted Patrol, which was organized in 1921 under Potentate W. F. Dickinson, and which has presented shows in many states and Canada. In 1962 it was selected to appear in the East-West Shrine football game parade and in the Rose Bowl parade.

The oldest uniformed Unit is the Foot Patrol, which was organized in 1908 under Potentate Beck, shortly after the Temple received its charter. The second oldest Unit is the Chanters, formed in 1919 with twelve members while A. R. Molyneaux of Cherokee was Potentate. The Chanters have given concerts, both sacred and secular, throughout the territory covered by Abu-Bekr as well as at State and regional Ceremonials.

Abu-Bekr's Brass Band was organized in 1922 and was directed for a number of years by Moses E. Reed, a prominent pioneer and a colorful figure in Sioux City music circles. Many Shrine members play in the famous Monahan Post American Legion Band which has won many championships at Legion conventions.

The Wrecking Crew was organized in 1926 to



handle the Hot Sands initiation and devise new stunts for Shrine parades. The Oriental Band was formed in 1933 by ten members of the Wrecking Crew and became a separate Unit under Potentate H. H. Adair in 1935. The Clowns started with four members as a part of the Oriental Band but when the membership reached twenty in 1954 they became a separate Unit under Potentate Milo Bergeson. The Clowns are a favorite with children on parade days and perform invaluable service entertaining in crippled children's hospitals.

Three Units of recent vintage round out the ten Abu-Bekr uniformed bodies. The Sahibs were organized in 1955 under A. G. Ireland to serve as "greeters" at Shrine functions. They are ready and willing, however, to undertake any task if called upon by the Potentate. The Cycle Corps was organized under Potentate Arnold Ferner in 1958. Finally, the newest Unit, the Harlan T Patrol, was organized in 1962 under Potentate Herman Slotsky. It is composed of miniature Model-T Fords that have proved a delight to young and old alike.

The strength of any Temple rests in large measure on its Shrine Clubs, and Abu-Bekr has eleven very active ones:

Emmet County (Estherville)	Council Bluffs	Spirit Lake
Great Lakes (Milford)	Harlan	Storm Lake
Kossuth County (Algona)	Humboldt	West Central
Tall Corn	Sergeant Floyd	



Just as Shrine Clubs are formed as single Units within a Temple, so too, there are within the National Shrine several regional groups composed of many Temples to foster Shrinedom and Masonry in general. Abu-Bekr Temple is a member of two regional groups — the Central States Shrine Association composed of twenty-three Temples, and the Midwest Shrine Association composed of fifteen Temples. The Central States Shrine Association, of which A. A. Heldridge of Abu-Bekr served as president in 1943, embraces the following Temples:

Abdallah, Kansas City, Kansas  
Abou Ben Adhem, Springfield, Missouri  
Abu-Bekr, Sioux City, Iowa  
Akdar, Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Al Kaly, Pueblo, Colorado  
Arab, Topeka, Kansas  
Ararat, Kansas City, Missouri  
Bedouin, Muskogee, Oklahoma  
El Jebel, Denver, Colorado  
El Kahir, Cedar Rapids, Iowa  
India, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Isis, Salina, Kansas  
Kaaba, Davenport, Iowa  
Midian, Wichita, Kansas  
Mirza, Pittsburg, Kansas  
Moila, St. Joseph, Missouri  
Moolah, St. Louis, Missouri  
Sahara, Pine Bluff, Arkansas  
Scimitar, Little Rock, Arkansas  
Sesostris, Lincoln, Nebraska



Tangier, Omaha, Nebraska  
 Tehama, Hastings, Nebraska  
 Za-Ga-Zig, Des Moines, Iowa

Abu-Bekr is also an active member of the Midwest Shrine Association which was formed on March 18, 1930, and is composed of twelve Temples. Three of Abu-Bekr's Potentates have been elected president of the Midwest group — W. W. Wilson in 1941; C. D. Cottingham in 1951; and Milo Bergeson in 1962. The Midwest Shrine Association has held two spectacular meetings in Sioux City — in 1951, when Ivan Stillman was Potentate, and in 1962, when Herman Slotsky was Potentate. The Temples comprising this Association are:

Aad, Duluth, Minnesota  
 Abu-Bekr, Sioux City, Iowa  
 El Riad, Sioux Falls, South Dakota  
 El Zagal, Fargo, North Dakota  
 Kem, Grand Forks, North Dakota  
 Khartum, Winnipeg, Manitoba  
 Naja, Deadwood, South Dakota  
 Osman, St. Paul, Minnesota  
 Wa-Wa, Regina, Saskatchewan  
 Yelduz, Aberdeen, South Dakota  
 Zor, Madison, Wisconsin  
 Zuhrah, Minneapolis, Minnesota

The Nobles who have played a stellar role in Sioux City Shrinedom over the past fifty-six years are the Illustrious Potentates of Abu-Bekr:



## PAST ILLUSTRIOUS POTENTATES

*Will H. Beck .....	1908	A. C. Eckert .....	1936
*D. M. Brownlee .....	1909	A. A. Heldridge .....	1937
*F. S. Lamar .....	1910	*H. C. Kuhlmann .....	1938
*A. L. Smith .....	1911	R. B. Searing .....	1939
*J. E. Garver .....	1912	W. W. Wilson .....	1940
*E. G. Dilley .....	1913	D. A. Noble .....	1941
*C. A. Borman .....	1914	*H. W. Rakow .....	1942
*George Jepson .....	1915	H. A. Jacobsen .....	1943
*John Berry .....	1916	N. N. Woodworth .....	1944
*M. A. Sears .....	1917	*C. B. Thorpe .....	1945
*Robert Hunter .....	1918	C. D. Cottingham .....	1946
*A. R. Molyneaux .....	1919	G. A. Neal .....	1947
*Charles M. Dickson .....	1920	C. J. Wolle .....	1948
*William F. Dickinson.....	1921	L. T. Brownlee .....	1949
*H. G. Pierce .....	1922	H. S. Hatfield .....	1950
Carl R. Jones .....	1923	Ivan Stillman .....	1951
*Hardy Wood .....	1924	Lean Rice .....	1952
F. H. Schmidt .....	1925	Ed Welding .....	1953
*D. E. Browning .....	1926	Milo Bergeson .....	1954
*Dr. H. Kellogg .....	1927	A. G. Ireland .....	1955
C. G. Cummins .....	1928	D. E. (Don) Jacobsen.....	1956
*F. A. Wood .....	1929	Mel Hilger .....	1957
J. G. Huber .....	1930	Arnold Ferner .....	1958
H. A. Morrill .....	1931	Jess Getz .....	1959
*C. M. Vickers .....	1932	C. E. Miller .....	1960
G. F. Ingledue .....	1933	Henry Doerr .....	1961
*J. M. Bach .....	1934	Herman Slotsky .....	1962
*H. H. Adair .....	1935		
*Deceased			

Denver Krall, Abu-Bekr's Illustrious Potentate in 1963, is successfully treading in the footsteps of a dedicated group of leaders who have left the imprint of their leadership on a truly outstanding Shrine Temple. His version of a Potentate is:

. . . A Potentate is an average Noble, having been appointed to serve his Temple through the Divan, putting forth his special efforts hoping one day he may become



Potentate of his Temple. When that day finally arrives, he is still an average Noble, wearing the same size hat. He soon discovers, however, that the fellow who invented the clock made one terrible mistake by not putting twenty-four figures on the dial instead of twelve. He wishes he could be divided into at least three equal parts, each capable of attending Masonic and Shrine functions, of which many usually occur at the same time.

Thanks to a faithful Divan, who are always willing and ready to assist their Potentate in the discharge of his duties, and thanks to the Nobility for their cooperation our goal toward happiness, charity and prosperity will be accomplished.

This fine spirit prevails throughout the Temple. Even Past Potentates are not overlooked when a job needs to be done. When notice of this impending history reached Potentate Denver Krall, he appointed Past Potentate Herman Slotsky to furnish the author with historical information. Such material, coupled with the rich resources found in the newspaper files of the State Historical Society of Iowa, have provided much of the data encompassed in this brief history of Iowa's four Shrine Temples.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN